

Public Art & Cultural Commission

August 22, 2013

Members Present

Robert Todd, Chair

Guillermo Rodriguez, Vice-Chair

Jaan Ferree

Victor Palomino

Gwynne Ruckebrod

Julie Calhoun-Roepnack

Sharon Trammel

Staff Present

Debbie Ivester, Assistant Director

Christy Bass, Interim Business Services Superintendent

Basil Punsalan, Event Specialist

Brenda Mills, Office of Economic Development

Rick Ledford, US Cellular Center Project Manager

Sam Powers, Office of Economic Development

Robert called the meeting to order at 4:08 pm.

1. Welcome New PACC Member

Robert welcomed new Commission member Victor Palomino.

2. Approval of July minutes

Guillermo motioned to approve the July minutes. Julie 2nd the motion and all approved.

3. Cultural Art Transition – Office of Economic Development

Sam Powers introduced himself and discussed the transition of the Public Art & Cultural Commission from the PRCA Department to the Office of Economic Development. He explained that this transition should broaden their role in the arts and encourage entrepreneurship in the community. Brenda Mills will be the new staff person working with PACC to help further the work of bringing the arts community together with the Economic Development community. Sam shared that the Chamber of Commerce has expressed an interest in being more involved in the art and cultural components. Another staff person in the Office of Economic Development is Jon Filman, and his role is to help facilitate and permit events

on public and private property that also help further the economic climate in the community and has an idea of how the arts can be worked into events. There are still logistics that need to be worked out, but the city is committed to helping make this transition happen. Sam introduced Rick Ledford, Project Manager at the US Cellular Center, and that he has been working closely with Basil throughout the terrazzo flooring project and will help complete it.

Gwynne stated that the PACC feel very strongly about this project and hope staff will reach out to PACC if they need any help. Robert stressed the importance of keeping all lines of communication open as the transition moves forward. Sam stated that there is a component of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that is for public art and that a goal of City Council is to keep making Asheville more vibrant and to keep public art in mind as capital projects are identified.

Robert mentioned that the County has recently sent out the revised tax breakdown that includes the new tax for the Cultural and Recreation Authority (CRA), and how this might be confusing for city residents who may not understand why they are being taxed when the city is not participating in the CRA.. He suggested that an educational component for residents may be important to help educate the community about why the city still has to set aside money for projects.

4. US Cellular Center Terrazzo Floor Meet the Artist: Joan Weissman

Basil introduced the terrazzo floor artist Joan Weissman, from Albuquerque, and expressed how exciting it is to have her here in Asheville. Basil stated that it has been a pleasure working with her through the alterations of the design. Joan thanked everyone and stated that it was an honor to be here in an arts city, and how the timing has worked out well with the project because the floor fabricator is just now setting the metal. She shared that there have been several good conversations with Rick about the alterations. She has done a lot of public art projects around New Mexico but none 3000 miles away, so this has been a good learning lesson. Jaan asked if the Mother of Pearl was still going to be in the design and Joan responded that there will be about 10% of it in the design. Rick said that it has been challenging to incorporate the art piece into the project, but as with all projects you have to remain flexible. He added that the fabricator installing the terrazzo has already been able to prep the art area and lay the strips, and are currently ahead of schedule. This will be about 90% finished tomorrow for Joan to see and the terrazzo is also being delivered tomorrow with the hope that it can start being laid next week. Rick said that Basil has done a good job of getting the call for artist out through Café and overall it has been a great learning process, and he looks forward to seeing the finished product.

Debbie added that we will be doing a time-lapsed photography as a record of the installation due to the webcam not having the right equipment set up. She and Chris Corl, US Cellular Center General Manager, are working with the city's Public Information Officer to put out a press release about the renovation on Monday which will include information about the terrazzo and the back story on Asheville Tile, the family owned business installing the floors. Asheville Tile also installed the initial floor in the Civic Center when it was first built.

Debbie mentioned that Urban Trail Station #13, Appalachian Stage, the statues and plaque should be replaced and installed in mid-September. Rick added that by the end of next week about 95% of the

bricks in the plaza should be installed and then the sculptures can be re-installed. Debbie reminded members that the fiddle was stolen but will be replaced; however it will be installed at a later date.

Robert asked if Joan had done terrazzo before to which Joan responded yes, and that there can be complicated architectural problems that need to be worked out using different techniques. She has reached out to the top terrazzo artists in the country for advice. Robert asked if fiber artists can work with terrazzo as well. Joan responded that this is how she got into terrazzo, and how she was commissioned to design three rugs for the University of New Mexico, but after five years the rugs were not properly taken care of and the University wished to remove them. The University removed the rugs and brought in Joan to do terrazzo floor.

Robert said that it can be worth the money along with some planning to help incorporate public art into many projects. Sam discussed the good timing and shared that the day the floor project is finished that a concert with about 2000 people in attendance is already scheduled and how they will be able to see it for the first time. Robert asked if an information board could be set up and kept up for a while to tell this story.

5. PACC Member Recognition: Honor Moor

Robert shared that Honor could not be here today but publicly recognized her for five years of serving on PACC. She has asked that she remain on one of the sub-committees so she will still be involved.

Robert said that the recent group of applicants may be an option to fill Honor's vacant seat. Debbie said that the pool of applicants could be used, and if so, a formal recommendation of a candidate could be made.

Gwynne motioned that Constance Richards (1st) and Denise Drury (2nd) be interviewed by the City Council Boards and Commissions Committee. Guillo 2nd the motion and all approved.

6. Assistant Director Report

Debbie stated that the Americans for the Arts 2013 slide show has been released and it has 250 slides with about six to eight slides per art piece. She recommended culling it down to about 50 slides and it will be ready for a presentation in the fall.

Sub-committee guidelines are complete, but the guidelines need more consistency. Debbie will continue to work on this during the transition and bring back to PACC at its next meeting for the final review.

Debbie suggested PACC to table its discussion of selecting a new date and time for the PACC monthly meeting until the transition to the Office of Economic Development is finished. Debbie agreed that if this recommendation is supported that she will work with Brenda to create another doodle poll.

Debbie shared that the PRCA Annual Report has been handed out and it provides the highlights and accomplishments of the department during the past year.

Robert asked about the Aloft Hotel parking garage public art acquisition schedule and call for artist will be made. Basil responded that he will be working on this call and he is expecting it to be placed during the first part of September. He is trying to incorporate areas that PACC have identified as important and continue fine-tuning the call. Basil added that the call will be pushed out in Café as well as additional sources. Robert said that even though this is a national search, it would be great to inform the local artists and encourage them to submit their designs.

Julie asked about the Nature Center and if the design drawings were already complete. Debbie said that there has been a slight delay and she will have to talk to Al Kopf for the new deadline.

7. Old Business:

Guillo reported that he was asked to attend a meeting regarding the Urban Trail Station Guastivino Monument, and that it went well and he will report back on the progress. Robert thanked Guillo and Jaan for being part of the process on behalf of the Urban Trail and leveraging interests that might be seen as competing, but that can actually be complimentary and refreshing.

8. New Business:

No new business.

Robert adjourned the meeting at 5:13 pm.